

Self-catering

10 of the best Italian villas

Il Tabacchificio, Diso, Puglia

New for 2019, this restored 1930s tobacco factory has been converted into a spectacular private villa with an almost cathedral-like sense of space. The open-plan living area has a real wow factor, with vaulted ceilings, banks of windows and original artwork hanging on the walls, while the six spacious bedrooms are all en suite. Extensive lawns surround a good-sized pool and alfresco dining area.

Details A week for 12 costs from €6,831; fly to Bari/Brindisi (020 7317 8518, thethinkingtraveller.com)

Dimora di Ciree, Ragusa, Sicily

If you've always dreamt of your own luxury beachfront shack, this gorgeous villa, just off the road from Pozallo to Pachino, will hit the spot. The sand comes right to the private deck, with glass doors looking out from the open-plan lounge diner. The two bedrooms are minimalist without being stark, and the whole house feels wonderfully light and airy.

Details A week for four costs from €2,856; fly to Catania (01789 297705, freelance-holidays.co.uk)

Collè Fiorentini, Florence

This 17th-century stone farmhouse with a private pool and outdoor hot tub is ideal for those who want to dip in and out of Florence without staying in the city. There is exposed stone in the double-height lounge and two bedrooms, with beamed ceilings and traditional Tuscan furnishings. Dinners on the terrace come with views across the surrounding vineyards, and the village of San Vincenzo a Torri is an easy walk away.

Details A week for four costs from €1,444; fly to Florence/Pisa (020 7684 8888, tuscanynowandmore.com)

Casa del Gelso, Acquafredda, Sicily

The northeast coast of Sicily is one of the most unspoilt, traditional parts of the island and this lovely two-bedroom villa is tucked between the imposing Nebrodi mountains and the towns of Cefalù and Capo d'Orlando. Kids will love the pool and gardens, while the outdoor kitchen has a hob and barbecue and is ideal for alfresco dinners. Inside, the decor is traditional and cosy, with two good-sized bedrooms and a second lounge with a sofa bed.

Details A week for seven costs from €1,326; fly to Catania (020 7193 7302, wishisicily.com)

Aromatica Rossa, San Gimignano, Tuscany

A stunning hilltop location with six bedrooms spread across two separate wings, this is a great option if more than one family are holidaying together. The infinity-edged pool is surrounded by rolling lawns and there are views over an olive grove and there is a shaded outdoor lounge area with spectacular views. Brick archways and wooden beams create a traditional feel indoors and there's



Villa Aia, Puglia



Aromatica Rossa, Tuscany

a state-of-the-art kitchen.

Details A week for 12 costs from €4,359; fly to Florence/Pisa (020 7684 8888, tuscanynowandmore.com)

Caso Fiorella, Umbria

Chic and contemporary, this stylish family retreat's open-plan downstairs combines an open-fire lounge, spacious dining area and a charming farmhouse kitchen. There are three bedrooms, one of them en suite. Outside, a stone path leads through gardens to a sizeable pool. The house is wonderfully rural — the nearest village is a five-minute drive and historic town of Citta della Pieve is eight miles away.

Details A week for six costs from €2,756; fly to Perugia (01749 812721, scottwilliams.co.uk)

San Donato, Lazio

This hilltop house, flanked by rolling countryside, makes an ideal base for exploring beyond Tuscany and Umbria. Sleeping six in four bedrooms, it has a well-equipped kitchen and dining area, while a wraparound *loggia* creates an alfresco living and dining space. The pool and gardens are private and it is a short drive from Bolsena Lake and a couple of miles from the nearest shops and trattorias.

Details A week for six costs from €2,551; fly to Rome (020 3603 4891, cvvillas.com)

Villa Tranquilla, Le Marche

This open-plan loft in a traditional stone farmhouse is a real find and comes with an indoor hot tub, a wine

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cellar and a well-equipped kitchenette. Breakfast is included, as are bikes for exploring the surrounding countryside and nearby vineyards. The villa has a private garden, and although there is no pool, Ancona's beaches are less than an hour away.

Details A week for four costs from €1,067; fly to Ancona (0800 1337999, oliverstravels.com)

Villa Aia, Puglia

This new villa makes a great base for exploring the historic towns of Ostuni and Cisternino, and the gorgeous white-sand beaches of Italy's heel. Sleeping eight in four bedrooms, it is glass-walled and modernist in design, with an open-plan living space on the ground floor and underground media room for movie nights.

Details A week for eight costs from €2,400; fly to Brindisi (020 3733 3896, simpsonstravel.com)

Sognatrice, Camaloro, Tuscany

Tuscany may be one of Italy's most romantic regions, but hot holes for two can be thin on the ground — which makes Sognatrice, a charming cottage with spectacular views, a real find. An old farm building converted to a "shabby chic" retreat, this charming cottage has a delightful bedroom with a free-standing bath, cosy living area with sleek kitchenette, and a shaded dining terrace with a plunge pool in the garden below.

Details A week for two costs from €858; fly to Pisa (020 8444 9500, invitationto.com)
Annabelle Thorpe